

**Policy:** The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) is assured adequate supporting services, equipment and facilities to perform autopsy examinations pursuant to DC Code § 5-1403 and 1409.

**Purpose:** The OCME provides all support or consultative services that may be necessary for the medical examiner to fulfill their responsibility of determining cause and manner of death.

**Scope:** The following procedures are to assist Medical Examiner physicians.

**Definitions and Abbreviations:**

DFS- District of Columbia Department of Forensic Science agency which receives evidence and performs forensic testing at the request of OCME Attending Medical Examiner or law enforcement representative.

OCME- District of Columbia Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

**1. Forensic Sciences/Criminalistics**

- 1.1. The OCME does not have the capability to perform in-house testing of forensic evidence, including trace evidence analysis and ballistics.
- 1.2. Most cases in which these services are required are under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Police Department or the Department of Forensic Sciences (DFS).
- 1.3. The pathologist will coordinate the collection of forensic evidence in these cases with the detective(s)/DFS.
- 1.4. If the pathologist feels that he/she needs to examine pieces of evidence (e.g. clothing), the pathologist may contact the detective or DFS and arrange for the examination.

**2. Contact Information**

- 2.1. Crime Scene Sciences Division
  - 2.1.1. Department of Forensic Sciences  
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202-727-8267